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FURTHER PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND
FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF THE
PROGRAMME AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION

HUMAN RIGHTS, MASS EXODUSES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

Written statement submitted by Centre Europe-Tiers Monde,
a non-governmental organization on the Roster

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement, which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

[24 February 1994]

Encirclement and forced evacuation of villages
in Turkish Kurdistan (1990-1993)

1. As emphasized in Commission on Human Rights resolution 1993/70, "human rights violations are one of the multiple and complex factors causing mass exoduses of refugees and displaced persons". Centre Europe-Tiers Monde (CETIM) has received disturbing information on the forced evacuation of Kurdish villages in Turkey. We therefore felt it important to bring it to the attention of the Commission on Human Rights.
2. The Turkish Government is attempting to create buffer zones by mass evacuations of Kurdish villages resisting oppression. Initially, it was villages situated near the frontiers with Iraq, Iran and Syria which were

emptied. Since 1990, the Turkish Government has taken advantage of the strategic situation created by the crisis and war in the Gulf to step up the evacuation of Kurdish villages on the pretext of maintaining security. Currently, villages in the 13 Kurdish provinces under a state of emergency are being subjected to the same treatment.

3. It should be noted that the evacuation methods used are extremely violent and that in stepping up the operations, it has been possible to avoid any international constraint: since August 1990, the European Convention on human rights has been suspended in the 13 provinces inhabited by Kurds, while the international community has maintained a complicitous silence.

4. The operations are conducted by the Turkish army. It blocks all ways in and out of villages and exerts pressure on all the villagers in order to intimidate them and induce them to collaborate as "village guards". ^{1/} The men are beaten and tortured, while the women are brutalized and sexually abused in front of their children. Houses are looted, crops burned and livestock slaughtered before the village is evacuated. All this is designed to create a no man's land.

5. Some villages are surrounded by the Turkish army so as to deprive the inhabitants of their means of subsistence and thus force them to leave. When the village is surrounded, no villager can leave without authorization. Some are ordered to remain in their houses. Anyone disobeying the orders given for any reason is shot immediately. The encirclement of villages prevents villagers from working their fields and vines; they cannot milk or graze their herds. They are prohibited from buying provisions in town or sending anyone ill to a doctor. Village encirclement is a way of exerting psychological and economic pressure on villagers to leave.

6. At present, there are hundreds of thousands of forcibly evacuated Kurdish peasants on the outskirts of towns. No infrastructure has been provided to cope with them. Thousands of destitute families live below the poverty line, without any decent shelter; crowded into holes dug in the ground or under plastic awnings, without adequate food or blankets or sanitation, these Kurdish families suffer not only from numerous illnesses, but also from the bitter cold of winter.

Mr. Suleyman Demirel, the President of Turkey, told the Journal de Geneve that "Out of 10,000 villages in the area, 345 have been completely abandoned by their inhabitants, and 262 partially" Journal de Geneve, 29-30 January 1994, report by Mr. Antoine Bosshard.

^{1/} In Kurdistan, the army forces villagers to participate in its repressive policy in two ways: firstly, it forces them on pain of death to take up arms against the Kurdish guerrillas, in many cases composed of their own children; secondly, it obliges some villagers to act as "village guards", who are both accomplices and actual scapegoats of the authorities, since they can survive only by becoming plunderers of their own communities ... unless they join the resistance.

8. According to the Turkish Human Rights Association, between 1990 and 1993, 874 villages and hamlets were completely or partially burned and evacuated. The number of villages evacuated, by region, is given below (the list of names of evacuated villages is available from the secretariat):

SIIRT:	12	BITLIS:	10
<u>Eruh sub-prefecture:</u>	35	<u>Norduz region:</u>	4
<u>Pervari sub-prefecture:</u>	26	<u>Mukus region:</u>	8
<u>Bevtüssebab sub-prefecture:</u>	45	<u>Hizan sub-prefecture:</u>	6
<u>Gercüs sub-prefecture:</u>	10		
<u>Catak sub-prefecture:</u>	35	HAKKARI:	61
<u>Kurtalan sub-prefecture:</u>	10		
		SIRNAK:	99
		<u>Uludere sub-prefecture:</u>	2
		<u>Silopi sub-prefecture:</u>	13
MARDIN:	4	DIYARBAKIR	
<u>Ömerli sub-prefecture:</u>	13	<u>Dicle sub-prefecture:</u>	16
<u>Mazıdaği sub-prefecture:</u>	20	<u>Hani sub-prefecture:</u>	9
<u>Derik sub-prefecture:</u>	19	<u>Kulp sub-prefecture:</u>	54
<u>Dargecit sub-prefecture:</u>	2	<u>Ergani sub-prefecture:</u>	3
<u>Midyat sub-prefecture:</u>	4	<u>Lice sub-prefecture:</u>	36
<u>Cizre sub-prefecture:</u>	2	<u>Hazro sub-prefecture:</u>	13
<u>Kasuri region:</u>	3	<u>Kocaköv sub-prefecture:</u>	2
		<u>Silvan sub-prefecture:</u>	1
		<u>Bismil sub-prefecture:</u>	1
BATMAN:	1	MUS:	
<u>Sason sub-prefecture:</u>	17	<u>Kizilağac sub-prefecture:</u>	7
<u>Kozluk sub-prefecture:</u>	1	BİNGÖL:	9
		ERZURUM:	2

9. CETIM requests the Commission on Human Rights to appoint a special rapporteur to investigate the forced evacuation of Kurdish villages in Turkey.
